

# Molly's Secrets

Arthur Keyser





ArtAge supplies books, plays, and materials to older performers around the world. Directors and actors have come to rely on our 30+ years of experience in the field to help them find useful materials and information that makes their productions stimulating, fun, and entertaining.

ArtAge's unique program has been featured in *Wall Street Journal*, *LA Times*, *Chicago Tribune*, *American Theatre*, *Time Magazine*, *Modern Maturity*, on CNN, NBC, and in many other media sources.

ArtAge is more than a catalog. We also supply information, news, and trends on our top-rated website, [www.seniortheatre.com](http://www.seniortheatre.com). We stay in touch with the field with our very popular e-newsletter, *Senior Theatre Online*. Our President, Bonnie Vorenberg, is asked to speak at conferences and present workshops that supplement her writing and consulting efforts. We're here to help you be successful in Senior Theatre!

***We help older performers fulfill their theatrical dreams!***

ArtAge Publications  
Bonnie L. Vorenberg, President  
PO Box 19955  
Portland OR 97280  
503-246-3000 or 800-858-4998  
[bonniev@seniortheatre.com](mailto:bonniev@seniortheatre.com)  
[www.seniortheatre.com](http://www.seniortheatre.com)

## NOTICE

**Copyright:** This play is fully protected under the Copyright Laws of the United States of America, Canada, and all other countries of the Universal Copyright Convention.

The laws are specific regarding the piracy of copyrighted materials. Sharing the material with other organizations or persons is prohibited. Unlawful use of a playwright's work deprives the creator of his or her rightful income.

**Cast Copies:** Performance cast copies are required for each actor, director, stage manager, lighting and sound crew leader.

**Changes to Script:** Plays must be performed as written. Any alterations, additions, or deletions to the text must be approved.

**Permission to Film:** You do not have permission to film, record, or distribute the play in any medium. You are also not allowed to post on electronic services such as, but not limited to, YouTube. Exceptions must be granted by written permission from the publisher.

**Royalty:** Royalties are due when you perform the play for any audience, paying or non-paying, professional or amateur. This includes readings, cuttings, scenes, and excerpts.

The royalty for amateur productions of this show is posted online. It is payable two weeks prior to your production. Contact us for professional rates or other questions. Royalty fees are subject to change.

Insert the following paragraph in your programs:

*Performed with special permission from ArtAge Publications' Senior Theatre Resource Center at 800-858-4998, [www.seniorthatre.com](http://www.seniorthatre.com)*

Molly's Secrets © 2019 by Arthur Keyser

MOLLY'S SECRETS

By Arthur Keyser

CAST

MOLLY ALBERT, a sixty-eight-year-old widow.

FRAN LOBIANCO, a seventy-one-year-old widow.

BETH COHEN, a sixty-seven-year-old widow.

Place

The family room in Beth Cohen's home, located in a planned community in the suburbs of Boston, Massachusetts.

Time

Late morning on a weekday in early October.

MOLLY'S SECRETS

*At Rise: There is a tray with a carafe and three cups preset in Beth's living room. She hears a knock at the door, walks to the door and opens it. Molly walks in and they hug.*

BETH: I missed you.

MOLLY: I arrived home late last evening...Is that coffee I smell, Beth?

BETH: Started it right after your call.

MOLLY: Did you reach Fran?

BETH: She should be here in a few minutes. She was getting ready for a luncheon date and was just finishing her face.

MOLLY: Another new man?

BETH: It's their second date.

MOLLY: Is he age appropriate?

BETH: Fran told me he won't be ninety-six for a few months yet.

MOLLY: Just perfect for a seventy-one-year-old woman.

BETH: He meets her qualifications. He has long-term care insurance.

MOLLY: We all have different priorities.

BETH: Well? I'm waiting for your explanation.

MOLLY: About what?

BETH: For heaven's sake, Molly! What do you think I'm asking? Where have you been?

MOLLY: I'm just teasing you.

BETH: When your best friend disappears, that's not an answer. (*Molly sits in an armchair.*)

MOLLY: Can we wait for Fran? Don't want to explain it twice.

BETH: I thought you were dead.

MOLLY: Now you're exaggerating. I sent you an email.

BETH: Only one in three months. It could have been sent by whoever murdered you and stole your laptop. It said, "Don't call the police. I'm doing fine." If I were a murderer, that's the kind of message I'd send.

MOLLY: You've always had such a vivid imagination.

BETH: Don't you watch the late night news? It's always full of frightening —

*(there's a knock from the door.)*

BETH *(continues)*: That must be Fran. Now, don't start anything.

*(Beth opens the door and Fran walks in. She walks toward Molly and then stops.)*

FRAN: Your face looks familiar. Have I ever met you before?

MOLLY: Don't try to be funny. It doesn't go with your personality.

BETH: Are you two going to start already? Call a truce.

MOLLY: I'm sorry. Let's start over.

FRAN: Why didn't you call us??

MOLLY: I couldn't. I had good reasons.

FRAN: Where were you hiding?

MOLLY: I went to Seattle.

FRAN: Don't tell me. I can guess. You met a man. I've been a widow for seven years and haven't found anyone. Your Sam died last year and already you've found someone. I'll never forgive you, especially if he's handsome and rich. Is he younger than you? How on earth did you find a man three thousand miles away? Does he have a friend for me?

MOLLY: Slow down and take a breath. First, in case you've already forgotten, Sam died two years ago...not last year. I didn't meet a man. I'm not looking for a man. No new man could replace Sam.

FRAN: So why does a sixty-eight-year-old woman leave Boston and go off by herself alone for three months without any explanation?

MOLLY: I wasn't alone.

FRAN: Who were you with?

MOLLY: My daughter. She lives in Seattle.

BETH: Your daughter!! The three of us have lived on the same street and been best friends for forty years...and this is the first time you ever said you have a daughter!

MOLLY: Because I didn't know I have a daughter.

BETH: I know we're all getting older, but that makes absolutely no sense.

MOLLY: If you'll just wait, you'll understand. Her name is Laura. She was born before I met Sam.

BETH: Did Sam know?

MOLLY: I had no reason to tell him. I never met her till three months ago.

FRAN: You're not making any sense.

MOLLY: It's complicated.

FRAN: What's complicated about having a daughter?

MOLLY: It's a story I've never told anyone. Only my parents and Laura's father knew.

FRAN: If you're going to make me cry, there goes my eye shadow.

BETH: I almost forgot about your date. Won't you be late?

FRAN: I called and cancelled, when I found out Molly was back. I think I woke him up. It's just as well. He took me to dinner on our first date and asked me to split the check.

BETH: Sounds like he's taking lessons from the millennial generation. Isn't that what they do when they date?

FRAN: If he was in his thirties, I'd be willing to pay the entire check.

BETH: You're too old to believe in Santa Claus.

FRAN: Are you saying Santa's not real? Last Christmas, I wrote him and asked for Robert Redford.

BETH: You have a better chance at hitting the lottery. But enough stand-up comedy. Molly's the star of our stage today. Pour yourself some more coffee, Fran, and sit down. Molly...you have our total attention. What's complicated enough to be hidden for all the years we've known you? *(they all sit)*

MOLLY: To start...I grew up in Seattle.

FRAN: This is the first time you told us that. I just assumed you were a Boston girl and I never wanted to pry.

MOLLY: And, as you'll learn today, I never wanted to talk about my early years. When I was seventeen and a senior in high school, my girlfriends and I were invited to a party at the officers' club at a nearby Air Force base. That's where I met Jim. He was a pilot and older than the high school boys I usually dated. I was so naïve...not ready for what happened.

BETH: Are you saying he was Laura's father?

MOLLY: Yes, but before I learned I was pregnant, Jim was sent to Vietnam. I wrote to him and told him what had happened.

FRAN: I'm not sure I want to hear his answer.

MOLLY: It's not what you're thinking. He was thrilled. We planned to marry, when he came home.

FRAN: Did you?

MOLLY: No. A month before my baby was due, I received a call from someone at the Air Force base, telling me that Jim had died when his plane was shot down.

BETH: I can't even picture what you must have gone through.

MOLLY: I wouldn't have survived without my parents. My father had a close friend, who was a lawyer. He made all the arrangements for a closed adoption of my unborn child under the Washington state law.

FRAN: What does that mean?

MOLLY: I wasn't allowed to see my baby after I gave birth...not even know if I had a girl or a boy. I gave up all rights to know who had adopted her and I had no way of ever seeing her birth records. That law was changed a few years ago, allowing adopted children to find the names of their birth parents.

FRAN: When did you move from Seattle to Boston?

MOLLY: Jim had named me the beneficiary of his Air Force life insurance policy. With that money, I was able to enroll at Radcliffe College, here in Boston. In my senior year, I met Sam, who was then a medical student at Harvard. Five years later, Sam and I married while he was a resident at Mass General.

FRAN: Why did you keep it from Sam?

MOLLY: I was never able to conceive while I was married to Sam. If I had told him I had been pregnant before I met him, he would be sure our problem was his fault and I didn't want that to happen.

BETH: What's Laura like?

MOLLY: She's absolutely delightful. She's fifty-one now but looks much younger. We were inseparable for the three months I was away. We acted like tourists...visited everywhere when she wasn't working. She lost her adoptive parents when she was in her twenties and she's been on her own for years.

BETH: Was she ever married?

MOLLY: She's had a series of boyfriends but never one serious enough to make a permanent commitment. And when the state of Washington opened its adoption

records, she began a search for me. She works for the state in their health department. That's where the records are kept.

FRAN: How very convenient...for her.

MOLLY: What are you trying to say?

FRAN: Because of her job, it was easy for her to find someone who gave a child up for adoption at about the time you did.

BETH: For God's sake, Fran, are you implying that—

FRAN: I'm just saying there are a lot of scam artists around.

MOLLY: Laura is not a scam artist. She is a beautiful, loving woman.

FRAN: Does she look like you?

MOLLY: More like Jim. He had blue eyes and so does she. She's slim as he was and—

FRAN: Lots of people have blue eyes and are slim.

MOLLY: Are you trying to make me cry? Why would you want to spoil all of this for me?

FRAN: I'm just trying to protect you.

MOLLY: No, you're not. You have three children and you complain they pay no attention to you. You're just jealous because I've found my daughter after all these years and she doesn't ignore me.

FRAN: Does she know how much money you inherited when Sam died?

MOLLY: I'm not answering that. I'm sorry I was so open with you. I'm through talking.

FRAN: That's fine with me. Maybe I can still reach my cancelled date. I never thought for a moment you'd react like this. I was just trying—

BETH: Stop it, Fran. You're just making everything worse. You both need a few days to get over this silly argument.

*(Fran stands, picks up her purse and leaves without a further word. Beth stands and walks towards Molly. Molly holds up her hand and signals Beth back to her seat.)*

MOLLY: It's all right. I'll be fine. Fran will always be Fran and we'll both forget this in a few days. It's hard to explain how happy I've been since Laura found me.

BETH: I hope you're not thinking of moving to Seattle.

MOLLY: Laura has given notice, where she works, and she'll be moving here. I have so much room in my house and she can fill up some of the emptiness left by Sam.

BETH: Does she plan to look for a job here?

MOLLY: I've asked her to not rush that decision. I have more than enough money for both of us. I just want to have as much time as possible to enjoy her and she feels the same.

BETH: Molly?

MOLLY: Yes.

BETH: I don't want to sound like Fran, but did you tell Laura about your finances?

MOLLY: She's my daughter. I didn't want to keep any secrets from her.

BETH: Don't you think you should have found a way to first confirm—

MOLLY: I know what you're thinking. I have to confess that at first, I had some questions in my mind. Two months ago, while Laura was working, I searched for a DNA lab in Seattle.

BETH: Are those results always accurate?

MOLLY: I checked that carefully. As to who is your mother, it's always one hundred percent accurate.

BETH: Did you ask Laura to go through the test?

MOLLY: How could I do that? She wouldn't understand. Although I stayed at a hotel, she had given me a key to her apartment. When she was at work, I went to her place

and took samples of her hair from a brush...and I felt horribly guilty, questioning her honesty.

BETH: You weren't stealing anything.

MOLLY: It felt like I was. I took her hair sample and some of mine to the DNA lab. A month later, the results were sent to me at my hotel. That was a month ago.

BETH: And?

MOLLY: I couldn't get myself to open the envelope while I was there. I brought it home with me.

BETH: Don't keep me in suspense. What did it say?

MOLLY: When I woke up his morning, I just stared at the envelope for almost an hour...and then I decided Laura is my daughter.

BETH: Without looking?! Suppose she's not?

MOLLY: You don't understand!

BETH: Don't you want to know for sure?

MOLLY: I'm taking her word for it.

BETH: Molly, shouldn't you—

MOLLY: I don't want to talk about it any longer.

BETH: But, what about the envelope?!

MOLLY: I lit a match to it and burned it.

BETH: For heaven's sake, Molly, Why!

MOLLY: I gave up my child once. I couldn't risk losing her again.

THE END